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TAGS: [ECON](#) [EIND](#) [ETRD](#) [EWWT](#) [IMO](#) [KTIA](#) [PREL](#) [SENV](#) [GR](#)  
SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION (IMO) SHIP RECYCLING  
CONVENTION - JOINT DEMARCHE WITH AUSTRALIA TO GREECE

REF: A. 09 STATE 41904; B. 08 STATE 20631

¶1. (SBU) On May 8, A/EconCouns and Julianne Hince, Deputy Chief of Mission for the Australian Embassy in Greece, discussed reftel points with Captain Elias Sabatakakis, Directorate for the Protection of the Sea Environment, Greek Ministry of Mercantile Marine, Aegean Sea & Island Policy. Sabatakakis will head the GoG delegation to the IMO Diplomatic Conference to be held 11-14 May in Hong Kong to adopt the final text of the Convention for the Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships. He has been part of the IMO discussion on this Convention since its inception. Sabatakakis told us that the Greek government has supported "in principle" the U.S. position against the provision that would implement a blanket restriction on the recycling of ships flying the flag of a Party State in the facilities of a non-Party state. He said that the GoG position against adoption of this blanket provision was developed in concert with GoG trade authorities. Furthermore, Sabatakakis indicated that he personally agrees with the Australian paper that proposes the IMO adopt amendments to apply "equivalency provisions" that would require non-parties to meet or exceed the standards set out in the Convention in a less trade-restrictive manner.

¶2. (SBU) Despite the GoG's agreement in principle with the U.S. and Australian positions, Sabatakakis stated that the GoG would remain silent during the Hong Kong meeting and defer to the EU common position, which will be to support the Convention with the provision that implements the blanket restriction in tact. He indicated that while the GoG is very eager to discuss the potentially negative implications of this blanket restriction on the Greek shipping industry, Greece does not want to break rank with the EU. Sabatakakis urged the U.S. and Australia to seek support for their positions with non-EU IMO member states instead.  
SPECKHARD